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Letter to General Mattis

San Dewayne Francisco

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General Mattis:

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to read this e-mail letter. I realize you receive many personal requests for assistance so I greatly appreciate you providing your personal e-mail to my relative General James A. Kessler.

My name is Garrick "Rick" Redden and I am currently living in Richland, Washington. The reason I am writing to you is to ask for your help to assist a family friend in the hopes of finding and retrieving her brother's "remains." My family friend is Terri Francisco-Farrell.

San D. Francisco was a Kennewick High Class of 1962 graduate. He was active in ROTC as well as excelled in Football and Wrestling. He always wanted to be an Air Force Pilot. On an Academic/Athletic Scholarship, San attended Central Washington State College and was part of the 1963 undefeated CWSC Football team. His career in the Air Force started and ended in three short months on November 25, 1968. USAF 1Lt. San Dewayne Francisco (Terri's brother) was flying an F4D on a reconnaissance-escort mission north of the Demarcation Line in Vietnam about 28 miles west-southwest of Dong Hoi, Vietnam. His F4D was shot down in a heavily fortified area near the Laos border/Ho Chi Minh Trail. He was scheduled to return home December 1, 1968.

My father, Ron Redden (a current Kennewick resident), was a college football teammate and family friend of 1 Lt. San D. Francisco in the fall of 1963 at Central Washington University. As late as June of 1964 my father and his wife (my Mom) would have dinner with San and his wife Kay, and their son Tod. San talked of the excitement of being a pilot and my father his goals to become a high school football coach. Our families remained close.

There are personal reasons for me wanting to help this family and specifically San's sister Terri Francisco-Farrell. Terri is 62 and currently working in the Tri-Cities. She has put forth tremendous effort to work with the Department of Defense, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Department of Missing in Action & Prisoners of War throughout the years after her parents both deceased. She pushed for accountability and action only to be given varying stories and types of information about her brother San. Over the years one can probably imagine what her thoughts have been as to the situation/location/etc. of her brother San.

As you can imagine there have been so many conflicting reports that have come forth about his "time" in Vietnam after being shot down and killed by American Search and Air Rescue personnel. Our goal is to find his remains and bring him back to American soil. This is important closure for his sisters and the rest of the family. With our past efforts which in 2012 included enlisting the help of Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, we were able to send Terri to Department of Defense family briefings and media attention to his case. We have continued to march on to find the truth about everything after the day of November 25, 1968. Terri was present at the 2014 Department of Defense meetings in Washington DC in June. At that time she went on Capitol Hill and secured three Washington State Senators (Murray, Cantwell and Brown) and two Congressman's (Hastings and Mc-Morris-Rogers) support to present to Air Force Casualty Team as well as Department of Defense officials. More information has been discovered through Research Investigative Teams of the DPMO and credible information as to his actual burial site by those that witnessed that tragic day in 1968. This information is the key to finding the burial site and bringing San home. Unfortunately, she was informed that San was not on the FY2014 retrievals that are scheduled for July through September 2014.

I can only imagine the angst Terri and the Francisco family is experiencing having to wait while being so close to knowing where he is buried. As former Alumni from the Tri-Cities and Central Washington State University and a successful hometown General in military, I would ask that you read her story and see if there is any type of assistance you could supply. I know from your military history, you have succeeded where others have failed. This family needs help and San needs to be brought back to American soil and be honored for the hero he was. Thank You for your time General Mattis!

Below is Terri's latest information she shared with me:

Rick:

Summary of San's investigation 2013/2014:

During the June 13, 2014 casualty briefings with Department of Defense officials Bob Maves, (JPAC) and Guy Bentz (DPMO) I was informed by Bob Maves that San was not on the FY2014 recoveries scheduled from July-September 2014. He explained that there were two burial sites indicated through investigations where San's remains could be. He explained to me that they could not just go in and dig both sites; they had to determine which site most likely was his and this had not been done yet. He explained that each dig had a team of members and costs associated with it. I was rather insulted by his demeanor and felt that San's remains should not be a budget line item.

After he moved to the next family conference I spoke with Guy Bentz who gave me a narrative that had just been faxed in for San's case. It was 14-2VM, RIT investigative report done on May 27, 2014. This report was not really very helpful as it contained a lot of "hearsay" information and several inconsistencies. Guy Bentz had two reports in his hand (the ones I have marked #1 & #2) These reports were done on May 28 and August 7, 2013, but had not been officially redacted.

These two reports have information that is the best information to date. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, 80, gave very detailed information and gave investigators a detailed sketch of the burial site. His memory is remarkably clear, but his age is a concern. The second person interviewed was Mr. Le Duc Qua, 64, who saw the burial site several times and feels he could locate the area again. These two witnesses can provide the information that Bob Maves (JPAC) was concerned about. These two witnesses hold the key as to where San's remains could be.

Congressman Doc Hastings was in Vietnam in June 2014 and was given a briefing by General Tran of the VNOSMP. He was informed that two witnesses had just been interviewed by JPAC RIT on June 3, 2014. One of the people interviewed was actually from a Volunteer Youth unit who helped bury San. This RIT is 14-3VM which has not been given to the family. Again first hand witness information to where San is located that I have not been privy too.....

The detailed map by Mr. Dau and the information received in June are pieces of information that could lead JPAC to San's burial site.

Guy Benz informed me that even though San is not scheduled for FY2014 retrievals, there is always a chance that if the information (map) and new witnesses information that he could be an alternate this year. This is my hope and what I pray for every day.

These past two years have been filled with enough information for a retrieval to be scheduled for San; my fear is that once again, he will be put on another list for another year.

RICK THIS LAST PARAGRAPH NEEDS TO BE HIGHLIGHTED, I DO NOT HAVE THAT COLOR ON MY FILL IN.....